

Prosopography and Database Design in the Medieval Londoners Project



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MEDIEVAL LONDONERS



SEARCH FOR LONDONERS

RESOURCES ▾

ABOUT US ▾



Home page of the
project website

ABOUT THIS PROJECT

BETA VERSION

This website introduces resources available for research about medieval London and its people, focusing in particular on documentary and narrative sources in print, but also highlighting archaeological and cartographic sources that illuminate the physical and material world that medieval Londoners inhabited.

An important component of the website is the *Medieval Londoners Database* (MLD), which records the activities of London residents between c. 1100-1520, and is searchable by name, gender, burgess status, location (ward, parish, and street if available), occupation, civic office, and guild. For more on this database and our invitation to provide data, click on Search for Londoners

The banner depicts the first stone bridge of London, begun in 1176 and in use until the 1830s. The scene is from the top part of a manuscript illumination in British Library, Royal MS 16 F. ii, f. 73 (done c. 1483, in Bruges).

<https://medievallondoners.ace.fordham.edu/>

Omeka exhibition on medieval objects in the Museum of London



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MEDIEVAL LONDON: INTRODUCTION

Welcome! These collections of short essays and images of medieval London objects, buildings, streets, and other sites were originally compiled by students at Fordham University's London Centre's study abroad program in Spring 2015. These reports were part of their coursework for MVST 4654: *Medieval London*, an interdisciplinary capstone class focusing on the archaeology and history of medieval London. In Fall 2017, students enrolled in the same course (this time offered by the History department as HIST 4654: *Medieval London*), added their reports on medieval objects.

For this interdisciplinary capstone course, each student researched and wrote on a medieval object at the Museum of London, describing the physical **object** (its dimensions, materials used, color and appearance, manufacturing process) and how medieval people used it (for what, when and where), particularly in terms of the object's association with medieval London. In addition to posting a photograph of the object, students were also to locate and post additional images of this type of object to illustrate its medieval context.

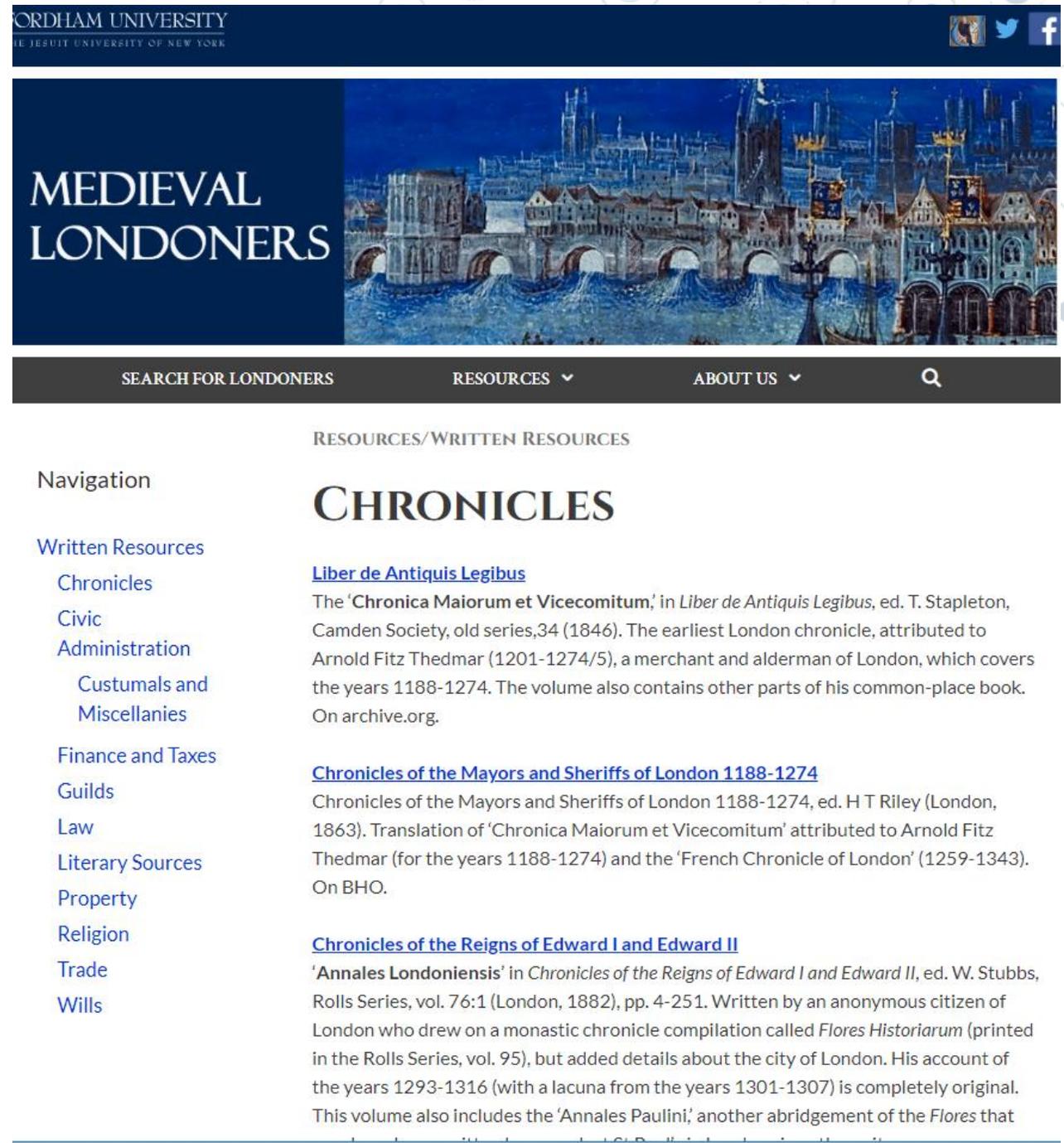


<https://medievallondon.ace.fordham.edu/>

The second assignment (for the 2015 class only) was a report on a medieval site, such as churches, monasteries, cemeteries, civic

E.L. Cuenca and M. Kowaleski, "Using Omeka and Other Digital Platforms for Undergraduate Research Projects on the Middle Ages," *The Digital Medievalist*, 11:1 (2018) at <https://journal.digitalmedievalist.org/articles/10.16995/dm.69/>

Sample page from Resources section



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MEDIEVAL LONDONERS

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CHRONICLES

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[Liber de Antiquis Legibus](#)

The 'Chronica Maiorum et Vicecomitum,' in *Liber de Antiquis Legibus*, ed. T. Stapleton, Camden Society, old series, 34 (1846). The earliest London chronicle, attributed to Arnold Fitz Thedmar (1201-1274/5), a merchant and alderman of London, which covers the years 1188-1274. The volume also contains other parts of his common-place book. On archive.org.

[Chronicles of the Mayors and Sheriffs of London 1188-1274](#)

Chronicles of the Mayors and Sheriffs of London 1188-1274, ed. H T Riley (London, 1863). Translation of 'Chronica Maiorum et Vicecomitum' attributed to Arnold Fitz Thedmar (for the years 1188-1274) and the 'French Chronicle of London' (1259-1343). On BHO.

[Chronicles of the Reigns of Edward I and Edward II](#)

'Annales Londoniensis' in *Chronicles of the Reigns of Edward I and Edward II*, ed. W. Stubbs, Rolls Series, vol. 76:1 (London, 1882), pp. 4-251. Written by an anonymous citizen of London who drew on a monastic chronicle compilation called *Flores Historiarum* (printed in the Rolls Series, vol. 95), but added details about the city of London. His account of the years 1293-1316 (with a lacuna from the years 1301-1307) is completely original. This volume also includes the 'Annales Paulini,' another abridgement of the *Flores* that

Aims of the Medieval Londoners Project:

- 1) To develop a digital resource that can be contributed to and used by undergraduate and graduate students**
- 2) To create a collaborative learning environment for students and other team members**
- 3) To provide an accessible online resource for students, scholars, and members of the public to discover more about the people who lived in medieval London and the online and print resources that contain information about them**
- 4) To create an off-the-shelf online prosopographical database that does not require significant funding or custom coding**

What is Prosopography?

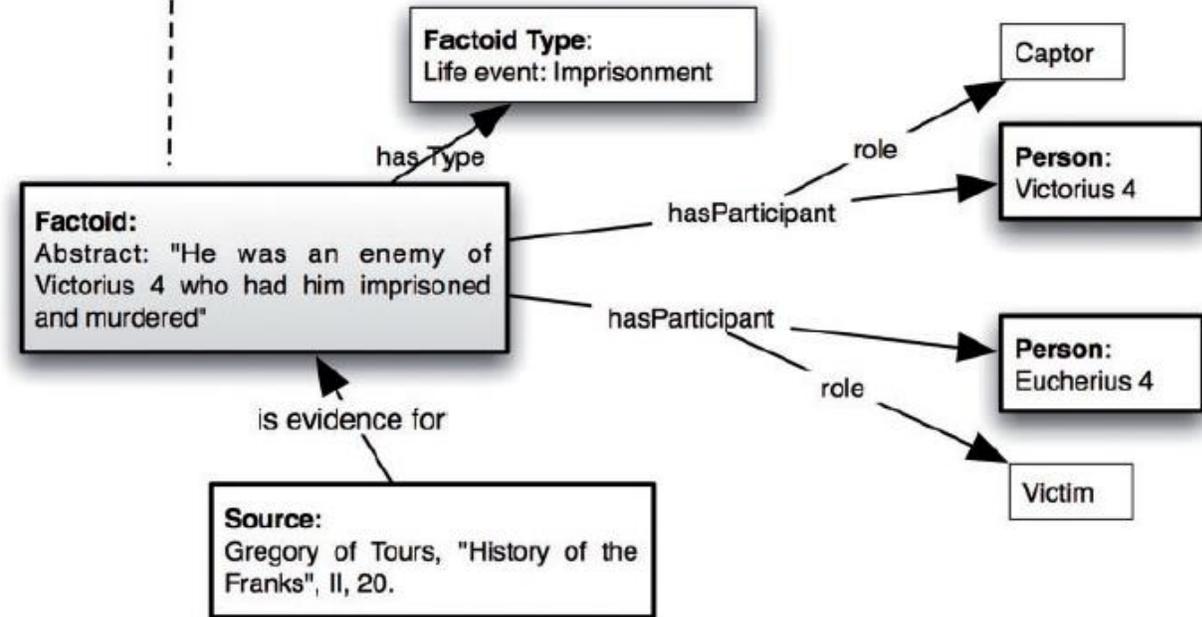
- **A research method** that systematically brings together data about a specific group of persons in order to reveal patterns that result from or influence historical processes
- **Collective biography** of a defined social group whose individual members are insufficiently documented for a biographical approach (defined by what they have in common, such as occupation, political rank, place of residence, family ties, guild membership ...)
- **Large data sets** can compensate for scarce or missing data
- Focuses more on the **average or typical characteristics** of the group than the unusual.

Development of Prosopography

1. The approach was formalized in the late 19th century by classicists who concentrated on collecting biographical data about members of a political elite to understand the acquisition and use of political power
2. In the 1970s, growing use of the technique to study large groups of badly documented individuals of lower status: search for the 'typical'
3. 1970s-90s saw a proliferation of large-scale, well-funded collaborative projects using computers (first mainframe, then PCs)
4. Late 1990s-early 2000s: move to online prosopography in the late: emergence of structured or 'factoid-oriented' prosopography
5. Now: digital prosopography and the semantic web (interoperability)

How older textual prosopographies are structured into factoid prosopographies

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Personal Information: "E. was described this way" → ■ Status: "E. held this status" → ■ Event: "E. took part in event of this type" → 	<p>Eucherius 4 v.inl. 470</p> <p>Of noble birth; Sid. Ap. Ep. III 8.2. Addressee of a letter from Sidonius Apollinaris praising him as one to whom the Roman state owed much for his military activities without having rewarded him; Sid. Ap. Ep. III 8 (facile clarescit rempublicam morari beneficia vos mereri) (the date is unknown, but the circumstances to which Sidonius alludes in this letter may have been the attacks by the Visigoths in 471/474).</p> <p>VIR INLVSTRIS: he and Pannychius were 'inlustres'; Sid. Ap. Ep. VII 9.18 (written in 470). He was apparently a candidate for the bishopric of Bourges in 470, but was ineligible since he was twice married and so excluded by the canons; Sid. Ap. Ep. VII 9.18.</p> <p style="border: 2px solid red; padding: 2px;">He was an enemy of Victorius 4 who had him imprisoned and then murdered; Greg. Tur. HF II 20 (super Euchirium vero senatorem calumnias devolvit, sc. Victorius).</p>
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M. Pasin and J. Bradley, "Factoid-based prosopography and computer ontologies: towards an integrated approach" *Digital Scholarship in the Humanities*, 30:1 (2015): 86-97, at p. 88.

Factoid list for *Eadburg* in the Prosopography of Anglo-Saxon England [PASE]

The screenshot displays the PASE website interface. At the top, the logo 'PASE' is prominently featured in a stylized red font. Below the logo is a navigation menu with links for Home, About PASE, Database, Domesday, Reference, Contact, and Help. A search bar is located on the left side, with a search button and a 'Reset Constraints' button. The search criteria are set to 'PERSON NAME: Eadburg'. The search results are displayed in a list format, with the first result, 'EADBURG 5: (l viii) Daughter of', highlighted in blue. A blue arrow points from this result to the right-hand side of the page, which shows a detailed view of 'Eadburg 5 (Female)'. This view includes a list of factoids, such as 'Recorded Name (9)', 'Personal Information (3)', 'Office (5)', 'Status (1)', and 'Personal Relationship (8)'. The 'Personal Relationship (8)' section is expanded, showing 'Eadburg 5 Daughter (Consanguineal kinship) of ~ (6)' and 'Eadburg 5 Wife (Affinal kinship) of ~ (2)'. The 'Event (17)' section is also expanded, listing various events like 'Allegiance (1)', 'Assistance (1)', 'Begging (2)', 'Charter-witnessing (3)', 'Confirmation of land/privileges (1)', 'Death/dying (1)', 'Decision-making (1)', 'Expulsion (1)', 'Grant and Gift (3)', 'Journey (1)', 'Killing/murder (1)', 'Marriage (3)', 'Meeting (1)', 'Property-exchanging (1)', 'Property-giving/selling (1)', 'Reporting (1)', 'Restoration of land/property (1)', and 'Seizure of land (1)'. At the bottom of the page, there is a footer with the text 'This site is maintained under a Service Level Agreement by King's Digital Lab'.

Home | About PASE | Database | Domesday | Reference | Contact | Help

Search

View: Persons Factoids

Include: coin data Domesday data

Contains text +

Persons +

Source +

Possession +

Location +

Event +

Date +

Criterion Reset Constraints

PERSON NAME: Eadburg x

Results 1 - 9 out of 9

EADBURG 1: *English person whose name was entered in the Liber Vitae of Brescia in the third quarter of the ninth century*

EADBURG 2: *(l vii-e viii) Witness to East Saxon charter, 893x706*

EADBURG 3: *(l vii-e viii?) Person (d. before 717) commemorated on 8 October in the calendar of*

EADBURG 4: *(m viii) Saint, abbess of Thanet, fl. 748, d.751*

EADBURG 5: (l viii) Daughter of

EADBURG 6: *(m ix) Wife of*

EADBURG 7: *(e x-l xi) Recipient in*

EADBURG 8: *(m x) St.; sister of King*

EADBURG 9: *(e x-l xi?) Owner of a whale-bone implement*

Eadburg 5 (Female)
Daughter of l viii

FACTOID LIST

- Recorded Name (9)
- Personal Information (3)
- Office (5)
- Status (1)
- Personal Relationship (8)
 - Eadburg 5 Daughter (Consanguineal kinship) of ~ (6)
 - Eadburg 5 Wife (Affinal kinship) of ~ (2)
- Possession (1)
 - with innumerable treasures: *Asser.VitAlfredi* 15
- Event (17)
 - Allegiance (1)
 - Assistance (1)
 - Begging (2)
 - Charter-witnessing (3)
 - Confirmation of land/privileges (1)
 - Death/dying (1)
 - Decision-making (1)
 - Expulsion (1)
 - Grant and Gift (3)
 - Journey (1)
 - Killing/murder (1)
 - Marriage (3)
 - Meeting (1)
 - Property-exchanging (1)
 - Property-giving/selling (1)
 - Reporting (1)
 - Restoration of land/property (1)
 - Seizure of land (1)
- Factoids linked indirectly to Eadburg 5 (1)

This site is maintained under a Service Level Agreement by King's Digital Lab

PASE faceted search on the textual edition cited in one factoid for Eadburg 5

Source: Textual Edition

Asser.VitAlfredi

>> << Go back...

>> Show associated factoids >> Hide associated events >> Show associated persons

Source Information

Author	Asser
Source Title	Life of Alfred
Language	Latin

NOTES

*Activities of the foreign armies on the Continent and events involving Frankish people that do not directly relate to Anglo-Saxon England that find mention in this source have been omitted.

EDITION(S)

Editor	Article or Book Title	Journal or Pub.Loc.	Date	pp.
Stevenson, William Henry	Asser's Life of King Alfred, Together with the Annals of Saint Neots Erroneously Ascribed to Asser. Edited with an Introduction and Commentary.	Oxford	1959	1-95

TRANSLATION(S)

Editor	Article or Book Title	Journal or Pub.Loc.	Date	pp.
Keynes, Simon, and Lapidge, Michael	Alfred the Great: Asser's 'Life of King Alfred' and Other Contemporary Sources. Translated with an Introduction and Notes.	Harmondsworth	1983	67-110

EVENT/TRANSACTION LIST

	Factoid Type	Source Reference	Short Description
1	Event	Asser.VitAlfredi 77	At the command of Alfred 8 , Wærfrith 6 was the first to translate the Dialogues of Gregory 1 from Latin into English.
2	Event	Asser.VitAlfredi 106.17-42	Alfred 8 reviewed judicial decisions made in his absence.
3	Event	Asser.VitAlfredi 106.46-61	If someone was unable to read, Alfred 8 ordered another to read books in English aloud to him.
4	Event	Asser.VitAlfredi 106.2-6	Anonymi 192 used very often to disagree with decisions made in assemblies by comites and praepositi (Anonymi 169).
5	Event	Asser.VitAlfredi 106.1-6	Alfred 8 was zealous in judicial cases brought on appeal.
6	Event	Asser.VitAlfredi 105	Alfred 8 was a very careful judge.
7	Event	Asser.VitAlfredi 104	Alfred 8 devised a lantern to prevent his candles from burning too fast.
8	Event	Asser.VitAlfredi 104	Alfred 8 ordered his chaplains (Anonymi 184) to make candles.
9	Event	Asser.VitAlfredi 102, 105	Alfred 8 promised to give one half of his mental and corporeal service to God.
10	Event	Asser.VitAlfredi 102	Alfred 8 very zealously assembled a school from many nobles of his people and also boys who were commoners (Anonymi 165).
11	Event	Asser.VitAlfredi 102	Alfred 8 commanded his ministri (Anonymi 160) to divide his annual income from taxes into four.
12	Event	Asser.VitAlfredi 100	Alfred 8 organized his ministri (Anonymi 162) at court into three shifts.
13	Event	Asser.VitAlfredi 99-102	Alfred 8 ordered his ministri (Anonymi 160) to divide into two equal portions to begin with the revenue of all taxes of

Fields in the Medieval Londoners Database [MLD]

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Record_ID: for each entry

Person_ID: Same number for each individual

Person_Record_ID: e.g., 100.003 = third record for individual with Person_ID of 100

Title

Document_Forename

Document_Surname

Standard_Name

Alias

Identifier: A=alien, C=clergy, M=married couple, V=widow or widower W=woman, etc..

Citizen

Gild

Occupation

Occ_Flag: indicates quality of data in Occupation field

Activity: Details about individual's appearance in the record (similar to Factoid, but less structured)

Ward

Parish

Street

Civic_Office

Gild_Office

Property: B=buyer, O=owner, T=tenant, etc...

Will: W=will-maker, H-heir, E=executor, etc...

Flag_Year

Year

Date_Range

Doc_Date

Rec_Type

Source

Document

Contributor

Cataloguer

Wiki_URI: link to Wikidata ref to a Londoner

HOP_URI: link to History of Parliament member bio

Notes

Selected fields in MLD

Rec_ID	Pers_ID	Pers_Rec	Standard_Name	Guild	Occupation	Occ_Flag	Activity	Ward	Parish	Civic_Office	Year	Source	Contributor	Cataloguer
1225	100	100.002	Abbot, John	Mercer	merc		Mercer: L BK (LMA MS: COL/AD/01/010) fo. 55v. See also Mercers' MS Wardens' Accounts 1347-1464 fos. 98v and 100r (the Mercers receive and pay money for Abbot as a Mercer sheriff). See also Beaven I.287 and 271.				1428	MASL.	Lancashire, Anne	Fostano, K. & Kow
3132	101	101.002	Abraham, William	Vintner	vintner		Served as Alderman. William Abraham, Vintner August 17, 1446 [Sworn August 26]. ¹ [Nominated: Ex-Sheriff Beaumont, John Chichele, T. Davy] (Prior) and/or Concurrent offices: S. 1447-48.	Vintry		Alderman	1446	Beaven I, 206	BHO	Duchovni, E.; How
							¹ . Journal 4, f. 135.							
4097	101	101.003	Abraham, William	Vintner			Summary Record: William Abraham, Vintner 1446, Aug. 17 (sworn Aug. 26) Replaced Wandesford. Vintry, 1446-56.	Vintry		Alderman	1446	Beaven II, 9	BHO	Duchovni, E.; Kow
990	101	101.001	Abraham, William				Elected Sheriff; chosen by Mayor.			Sheriff	1447	MASL.	Lancashire, Anne	Fostano, K. & Kow
2856	945	945.001	Abyndon, Nicholas de				Served as Common Serjeant-at-Arms/Common Crier. (LBF, 87)			Common Serjeant-at-Arms/Common Crier	1343	Barron, London, 366.		Howes, D.
2293	102	102.003	Abyndon, Simon de	Draper	draper		Served as Alderman. Simon de Abyndon, Draper 1316 [Acting Aug. 29, 1317, Acting July 6, 1318]. ¹ Removed to Tower.	Broad Street		Alderman	1316	Beaven I, 70	BHO	Duchovni, E.; How
							¹ . H.R. 46 (23), 47 (23).							
3777	102	102.005	Abyndon, Simon de	Draper			Summary Record: Simon de Abyndon, Draper 1316. Replaced Trente. Broad Street, 1316-18, Tower, 1318-22. Elected for Billingsgate 1320 from Tower and declined to move. M.P. London, 1316; Auditor, 1312. Died 1322; Will enrolled July 26. One of the Aldermen in 1220 named with their Wards in Letter Book E, fo. 104 b.	Broad Street		Alderman	1316	Beaven I, 381	BHO	Duchovni, E.; Kow
2994	102	102.004	Abyndon, Simon de	Draper	draper		Served as Alderman. Simon de Abyndon, Draper 1318 [Acting July 26, 1318, Present May 13, 1322]. ¹ From Broad Street. Elected Alderman of Billingsgate, January 16, 1320, but was re-elected for Tower two days afterwards. Died, 1322; Will enrolled July 26, 1322 [H.R. 51 (14)]. (Prior) and/or Concurrent offices: S. 1319-20.	Tower		Alderman	1318	Beaven I, 197	BHO	Duchovni, E.; How
							¹ . H.R. 47 (44); LBE, f. 138.							
633	102	102.001	Abyndon, Simon de	Draper	draper	E	Elected Sheriff.			Sheriff	1319	MASL.	Lancashire, Anne	Fostano, K. & Kow
2129	102	102.002	Abyndon, Simon de	Draper	draper	E	Served as Alderman. Simon de Abyndon, Draper (Sheriff) January 16, 1320 ^a From Tower; declined to remove. (Prior) and/or Concurrent offices: S. 1319-20.	Billingsgate		Alderman	1320	Beaven I, 22	BHO	Duchovni, E.; How

Team Members

Medieval Londoners Project

Project Manager and Editor: [Maryanne Kowaleski](#) (Joseph Fitzpatrick SJ Distinguished Professor of History and Medieval Studies) has designed the database structure, set the protocols for name linkage, done initial name linkage, written the descriptions of sources, and serves as the contact person with external collaborators. She is also Webmaster for the [Center for Medieval Studies](#) and has published research on medieval maritime history, towns, demography, gender, and the digital humanities.

Technical Director: [Katherina Fostano](#) (Visual Resources and Digital Coordinator for Art and Music History and Medieval Studies) has set up and maintains the digital platforms for the WordPress and Omeka sites, established instructions and work flow for web-scraping data, is responsible for creating the Linked Open Data functions of the database, and serves as the contact person with Fordham IT.

Data Developer and Analyst: [Elizabeth Duchovni](#) (M.A. student, Medieval Studies) heads our efforts to automate the conversion of html source material into database records within our Londoners schema. Using a variety of open source tools (primarily Perl and jq), she has helped create customized programs for data validation, extraction, and reformatting. In addition, she advises on issues of database content and name linkage. She has a Ph.D. in Mathematics and is writing a thesis on medieval English navigation between the years 1200 to 1500. Her interests also include medieval Icelandic literature, paleography, and the history of the English language.

Contributing Editor and Visual Design: [David Howes](#) (M.A. Student, Medieval Studies) has taken the lead on the WordPress design of the website, entered information on civic officeholders into the database, worked on name linkage, and helped to correct data before upload to the Omeka database. He is writing a thesis on accountability and the English mayoralty from 1191 to the Reformation. His other interests include civic ceremonies, English-French relations from the twelfth to the thirteenth centuries, and urban culture.